

VZCZCXRO6941
OO RUEHPA
DE RUEHC #0835/01 3281132
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 241127Z NOV 09
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHBP/AMEMBASSY BAMAKO IMMEDIATE 1440
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN IMMEDIATE 4938
RUEHWN/AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN IMMEDIATE 0095
RUEHBM/AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST IMMEDIATE 2633
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE 5944
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN IMMEDIATE 1354
RUEHCO/AMEMBASSY COTONOU IMMEDIATE 7760
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE 0272
RUEHSP/AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN IMMEDIATE 0136
RUEHPG/AMEMBASSY PRAGUE IMMEDIATE 1450
RUEHPA/AMEMBASSY PRAIA IMMEDIATE 4949
RUEHRA/AMEMBASSY RIGA IMMEDIATE 2078
RUEHSF/AMEMBASSY SOFIA IMMEDIATE 4274
RUEHVL/AMEMBASSY VILNIUS IMMEDIATE 2957
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE 0403
INFO RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 8820

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 STATE 120835

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/16/2019

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#)

SUBJECT: ACTION REQUEST - SEEKING CANDIDATES FOR UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

REF: STATE 090247

Classified By: Classified by IO Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
Gerald C. Anderson, reason 1.4 b and d

1.(U) This is an action request, please see paragraphs 5 and [16](#).

SUMMARY

[12](#). (C) In May of 2010, the UN General Assembly in New York will elect new members to the UN Human Rights Council (HRC). Election to the HRC is done by regional group. The United States is committed to improving the credibility and effectiveness of the Council and part of our strategy is to encourage qualified countries to run for the Council. Action addressees are requested to provide their insights with regard to host country's suitability for membership in the HRC as well as host country's willingness to run (see para 7). Action addresses were selected as potentially suitable based on the Department's initial research on potential candidates. Note for Bridgetown: inquiry is with regard to Barbados only. END SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

[13](#). (C) The United States is committed to supporting candidates for election to the UN HRC with a genuine commitment to human rights and opposes candidates with a record of serious human rights abuses. In creating the HRC, UN member states committed to take "into account the contribution of candidates to the promotion and protection of human rights" (res. 60/251).

[14](#). (SBU) The Department will need to determine which country(ies) to encourage actively to run based on your initial assessment of interest and on their predicted ability to win an election in New York. Many possible candidates are not eligible for candidacy as they are already serving on the HRC (HRC membership list available at <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/membership.htm>), or are ineligible for election as they have served two consecutive terms. END BACKGROUND

ACTION REQUEST

15. (U) Department requests action addressees to provide their assessment of host country suitability for HRC membership. Factors Post may wish to consider include:

- Capacity: The Human Rights Council meets frequently both informally and formally and member states need to have adequate resources in Geneva or willingness/ability to travel from capital.
- Alignment with the United States on key issues: The Council addresses a wide spectrum of issues including country-specific situations, indigenous issues, economic, social, cultural and political rights, and racism. We are concerned that the Council has increasingly been shifting away from its mandate to address country-specific situations and the United States would appreciate the support of more member states to continue this important country-specific focus. The main exception to the HRC's disinclination to address country-specific situation is its disproportionate, biased focus on Israel. The United States is seeking to move the Council in a more positive direction with regard to Israel.

STATE 00120835 002 OF 002

- Group dynamics: Voting at the HRC is largely done by regional group. We are looking for more countries to join the Council that are willing to be independent from their regional groups at times and are open to exchanging positions and strategy with the United States Countries that would be willing to work in their national interest, even if it is not the position of the regional group, would be an asset on the Council.

16. (SBU) Department requests action addressees, if appropriate, based on, inter alia, your assessment of the criteria described in para 5, to demarche at the highest appropriate level, drawing on the points below. In responding, Department requests Posts to provide their assessment of whether host government would be willing to run for a seat on the Council. Posts should not deliver this demarche if they determine it would be counterproductive to do so, or if posts assess that the host country is not suitable for HRC candidacy, and in such cases, are requested to inform the Department of their rationale.

-- Express U.S. concern about the performance of the UN Human Rights Council to date, and our belief that the only way for the Council to change direction and to begin to address the most pressing human rights problems facing the international community is for strong democracies to assume as many seats as possible in the 2010 HRC election.

-- Note the international recognition and prestige that comes with joining a high-profile body like the HRC, and indicate that a position on the HRC would allow the government to influence the UN's approach toward human rights and signal the government's commitment to engaging with the international community on these critical issues.

POINTS OF CONTACT AND REPORTING DEADLINE

17. (U) Posts are requested to report outcome of demarche via front channel cable by no later than December 4, 2009. Posts should use SIPDIS caption in responses. Please contact IO/HR Colleen Neville with any questions.
CLINTON